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C O N F I D E N T I A L AMMAN 001274

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PTER](#) [PREL](#) [LE](#) [JO](#)

SUBJECT: JORDAN'S POSITION ON HARIRI'S DEATH

REF: STATE 27178

Classified By: Charge David Hale, Reasons 1.4 (B) & (D)

1. (C) Charge delivered reftel demarche to Foreign Minister al-Mulki and Royal Court Minister al-Rifai, and spoke briefly with the King on the matter, on February 16. Mulki said he had garnered support within the Arab League and from Amre Moussa to host an emergency ministerial in Damascus on February 18. It would be used as cover to convey the strongest possible message on the need for Syrian compliance with UNSCR 1559. He said the Syrians had not given their formal approval for the meeting, and Egyptian FM Aboul Ghaith was reportedly not fully aboard as well ) the issue for him, Mulki said, being the venue. Although the ministers would convene under the banner of expressing "solidarity and support for Arab states facing crises," that rubric would be window dressing for tough talk behind the scenes. Rifai confirmed that this initiative has palace backing. Charge stressed to both officials that the message on compliance needed to be as blunt as possible, that careful preparation was needed to ensure that the ministerial did not leave a public perception of Arab League support for Syria, and that the Syrians should not be led to believe that improved Syrian behavior in one area would relieve them of the need to act in other areas of U.S. concern. The King indicated his support as well for a tough message on UNSCR 1559 compliance.

2. (U) King Abdullah released a statement February 14 condemning the "cowardly criminal murder" of Hariri and pledging Jordan's support for Lebanon. He praised Hariri as a "great statesman who made remarkable contributions to the building of modern Lebanon and the development of its economy."

3. (U) Jordan sent to Hariri's funeral a delegation of elder statesmen, led by the President of the Senate and ex-Prime Minister Zaid al-Rifai.  
HALE